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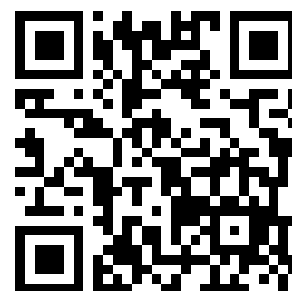
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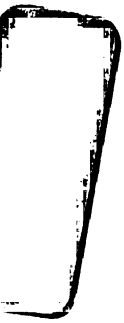
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1777  
116.c.5.  
A N

E L E G Y

K

WRITTEN AT A

CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY

IN THE

AUSTRIAN NETHERLANDS.

“ Paulum sepultæ distat inertæ

“ Celata Virtus.”

HOR. Ode ix. Lib. IV.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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[ A N

## E L E G Y.

**T**HE pensive Train of Contemplation sweet,  
 Rise with the beamy Fires of Vesper's Star;  
 The dying Gales in softer Whispers greet  
 The shadowy Night, thron'd in her silver Car.

The Scheld in gleamy Radiance glides along,  
 Laving the lonely Chartreux' aged bow'rs;  
 From pealing organs swells the solemn Song,  
 And choral Hymns lead on the midnight Hours.

15

A 2

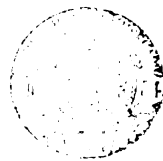
Save

Save when these Rites the watchful Heart declare,  
 A dread Repose broods o'er the hallow'd Ground;  
 Or when sad Pilgrims to the Shrines repair,  
 Where many a fainted Relick hangs around.

The dusky Pile in Vandal Ages rear'd,  
 Sacred to Solitude, to Pray'r, and Praise,  
 The Poet's Lay perhaps hath never heard,  
 Since the first Father's long-forgotten Days.

Encircling Ivy chains the mould'ring Tow'r;  
 Funereal Yews; throw round a death-like Gloom;  
 Her Cloisters Melancholy wanders o'er,  
 And Grief fits languid on the sculptur'd Tomb.

Can Error reign in these calm Seats of Peace?  
 Here, doth not Wisdom make her blest Abode?  
 Doth not the Voice of restless Passion cease?  
 Here, the rapt Soul hold Converse with her God?



When

When the rais'd Spirit, dead to all below,  
 Burns with seraphic Ardour unconfin'd,  
 Can earth-born Scenes teach human Breaſt to glow  
 With ſuch pure Flames, and leave their Droſs behind?

So, when the Tempeſt low'rs in Ev'ning Skies,  
 Some wilder'd Trav'ler views a lambent Flame;  
 But led by treach'rous Rays where Danger lies,  
 He dies unpity'd, and unknown to Fame.

The Storm-toſt Mariner to Ports of Reſt  
 Anxious, o'er Rocks and wild Waves, works his Way;  
 But Wiſdom places in the heedleſs Breaſt,  
 What the falſe World nor gives, nor takes away.

To theſe dank Walls, in ſearch of true Repoſe,  
 Thus erring Zeal and harraſs'd Minds have flown;  
 But found no bleſt Afylum from the Woes  
 That cleave to Life, and haunt the Boſom's Throne.

Though Fancy decorate this awful scene,  
 Awhile the flumb'ring Passions Peace controul;  
 Yet oft Repentance wastes the placid Mien,  
 And silent Anguish preys upon the Soul.

Though down the founding Isles the Vot'ries muse  
 On the World's Vanities and empty Joys;  
 Life's fleeting Hours the Visionaries lose,  
 Which active Virtue usefully employs.

Nature's Affections on the Heart recoil  
 Unchanging, while the purple Currents flow;  
 Humanity was born to varying Toil,  
 Alternate Hours of Strife and Rest to know :

That Life to fullen Solitude consign'd,  
 For social gen'rous Purposes was giv'n:  
 No rigid Rules was Penitence enjoin'd,  
 " To purify her contrite Heart for Heav'n."

Not

Not countless Orisons at glittering Shrines,  
 Not Melodies before the fainted Stone,  
 Feed pure Religion's Flame, that faintly shines,  
 Confin'd to solitary Cells alone.

In these Retreats, where pale-ey'd Spleen retires,  
 Sloth's dronish Sons, and superstitious Zeal,  
 Perhaps some Bards quench'd all the Muses Fires,  
 And bade the radiant Paths of Fame farewell.

O Gesner\*! hadst thou scorn'd the heav'nly Muse  
 That led thy Steps to Virtue and Renown,  
 Reviv'd all Eden to thy ravish'd Views,  
 And made the Palm of moral Song thine own:

Hadst thou to some lone Chartreux' Cell retir'd,  
 Where Youth and Genius wither in their Prime;  
 Thy living Lays no future Age had fir'd,  
 Thy Name had slept beneath oblivious Time.

Here,

\* Gesner, Author of the Death of Abel, and other Performances in the German language.

Here, what avails each pensive Sage's Lore?  
 The thorny Paths Truth's holy Martyrs trod?  
 All in their Sphere uniting to explore  
 The Ways that lead to Happiness and God.

Or, could those Heroes start from Death's cold Shade,  
 War's horrid Bolts in youthful Vigour flew:  
 Such, Fontenoy\*! thy fatal Fields display'd;  
 And brought all Thrasymene to Britain's View:

Would not Reproach dart from the Soldier's Eye?  
 Would not his bold impartial Tongue declare,  
 " Fair Fame forbids the virtuous Man to die †,  
 " And all the Brave are Heav'n's peculiar Care?"

" Whether triumphal Wreaths adorn their Brow,  
 " Or Fate the Warriors from the Toils release,  
 " When o'er their Graves the weeping Muses strew  
 " Spring's fairest Flow'rs, and sing their Shade to Peace."

No

\* The Field of Fontenoy is at a little Distance from the Monastery.

† " Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori." Horat.

No longer Carnage gluts her crimson'd Steel;  
 Yet, while a British Muse still lingers here,  
 Can she forbear her Heroes Wounds to feel?  
 To pay the sacred Tribute of a Tear?

To deck, with grateful Awe, their hallow'd Mould?  
 With gentle Collins breathe the mournful Lay?  
 " Attend the Spring with dewy Fingers cold,  
 " And bless the Turf that wraps their honour'd Clay?"

But ye, who waste in mute lethargic Ease  
 Revolving Years, from hardy Manhood's Prime;  
 Will Glory sculpture in her Fane like these,  
 And snatch your Mem'ries from the Stream of Time?

Here, faint and cold, the drooping Virtues beam,  
 With Lustre fruitless, cheerless, and unknown;  
 Like sad sepulchral Lamps, that bluey gleam  
 Through dreary Vaults, and light the Dead alone.

Unheard the Pæans of the tuneful Train,  
 That welcome Truth and Mercy from the Skies\*,  
 To grace Imperial Joseph's halcyon Reign,  
 Around whose Throne reviving Honours rise.

O Prince belov'd! some future Bard may pour,  
 In loftier Lays, the Tide of Verse along;  
 Spread Emulation's Flame from Shore to Shore,  
 And Patriot Princes kindle with her Song.

So tow'ring Pindar's Theban Swans aspire †,  
 Bear to the Clouds his fam'd Sicilian's ‡ Praise;  
 Like him the Muse's Sons should wake the Lyre,  
 To Virtue sacred, and unspotted Bays,

But

\* Written soon after the Emperor's Proclamation ~~appeared~~, permitting every Subject to have Access to his Presence, to represent their Grievances and Complaints.

† "Multa Diræum levat Aura Cycnum." Hor. L. IV. Od. ii.

‡ Hiero.



But not to Thrones or princely Domes confin'd;  
 \* Along sequester'd Vales they love to stray,  
 Where modest Worth, the Grace of Human-kind,  
 Blooms in the Shade, and shuns the Glare of Day.

Oft at the silent Eve, or Saffron Dawn,  
 There, rapt'rous Visions bless the Poet's Eyes,  
 Ideal Forms glide o'er the pearly Lawn,  
 Or Structures fair with moral Meaning rise:

Mild beams the Ray from Truth's all-piercing Eye,  
 Lucid and full her snowy Mantle flows,  
 Touch'd by her Wand the murky Shadows fly,  
 And all the Landscape at her Presence glows.

Around their Queen, the Sister Arts attend;  
 The Pow'rs of Painting, Melody, and Song;  
 And Liberty, the Muse and Virtue's Friend,  
 To Honour's Temple leads her Train along;

\* "Scriptorum chorus ornus amat nemus, et fugit urbes." Hor. L. II. Epist. ii.

Unmov'd at Tyranny's malignant Frown,  
 Gleaming in Mail, and grasping clanking Chains;  
 Red Persecution, with her triple Crown,  
 Or Vice, with Satyrs, rev'ling o'er the Plains.

But not one Spark of this celestial Fire,  
 Here warms the Heart, unlocks the silent Tongue,  
 Or arms with Pow'rs that Freedom could inspire,  
 When Zeuxis painted, or Alcæus sung.

The Lyre, with Rage divine, then fill'd the Breast,  
 With glowing Zeal, to bigot Hearts unknown;  
 And Genius, with her boldest Strokes, imprest  
 The vivid Canvass and the breathing Stone.

But here, how fall'n! how droops the free-born Soul!  
 Crouching beneath a Pontiff's sacred Frown:  
 Behold, alas! the mystic Beads and Cowl,  
 Succeed the Patriot's Steel and Laurel Crown.

Would

Would such with Rapture on the Canvass dwell?

Would kindred Ardours sparkle in their Eye?

Would Life's warm Pulses emulative swell,

Like those to conquer, or like those to die?

When Freedom mourns her sacred Fires oppress'd,

How bright Demosthenes and Tully shine!

But here, dull Legends foorth a torpid Rest,

And all neglected sleeps their Page divine.

So lift the frozen Alps their hoary Brow,

Cold and unmov'd before the Solar Ray,

Though roseate Spring smiles in the Vales below,

Pours her gay Notes, and greets the genial Day.

But let not Candour close the Lay severe,

Nor frown indignant on a cloister'd Life:

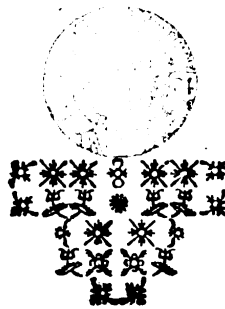
Haply some antient Virtues linger here,

That fled from venal Crouds and noisy Strife.

Here the Heart, dead to Folly's tinsel Joys,  
 Cleaves to the hallow'd Cross and spiny Crown:  
 Those Hours which Vice in Orgies still employs,  
 Are wing'd with Praises to their Maker's Throne.

Their Gates, unfolding at the Trav'ler's Voice,  
 Declare some hospitable Genius here,  
 That bids the weary'd Pilgrim's Heart rejoice,  
 Pours Pity's Balm, and shares in Mis'ry's Tear.

So may the Tiding of eternal Peace,  
 In brighter Worlds, these pious Cares repay!  
 There, human Woes with human Frailties cease,  
 And Truth no longer mourns her clouded Ray.





























































































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# An Elegy written at a Carthusian Monastery.

An Elegy written at a Carthusian Monastery in the Austrian Netherlands.

## Anonymous

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44 quatrains, after Gray's Elegy written in a Country Churchyard. The anonymous poet follows Gray at a distance, imagining the monastery, like the rural village, as a place where the potential for heroism, political greatness, and poetic fire lies buried in obscurity: "In these Retreats, where pale-ey'd Spleen retires, | Sloth's dronish Sons, and superstitious Zeal, | Perhaps some Bards quench'd all the Muses Fires, | And bade the radiant Paths of Fame farewell. The center of the poem salutes the dead at "The Field of Fontenoy ... at a little Distance from the Monastery" p. 8n., followed by a quotation from William Collins's "How Sleep the Brave." The elegy, suffused with the anti-Catholic sentiments, concludes with the concession that monastic life is at least preferable to libertinism: "Haply some antient Virtues linger here, | That fled from venal Crouds and noisy Strife." Not seen.

Critical Review: "The author of this Elegy laments the grievances of a monastic life, which secludes its votaries from the exertion of those virtues that can only be cultivated in society. The gloominess of the scene is artfully heightened by contrast, and the versification is suitable to the subject" 39 (March 1775) 250.

Westminster Magazine: "Paints the grievances of a monastic life in numbers happily adapted to the gloominess of the subject" 3 (April 1775) 212.

John Langhorne: "We all know how much may be said against the monastic life, and the Author of this poem has fallen on the general objections. What he has advanced in its favour has something more of novelty, and is conceived in no very vulgar strain of poetry" Monthly Review 53 (August 1775) 186.

Gentleman's Magazine: "This performance (which we have been told is by a young clergyman of our church) has evident marks of genius, and seems inspired by the same plaintive Muse that breathes in the strains of Jemingham,... The two last lines ["With Gentle Collins breathe the mournful lay..."] are a quotation from an ode by Collins, 'written in the beginning of the year 1746,' and the rest of the passage seems to allude to another beautiful ode, by the same writer, 'on the death of Col. Charles Ross in the action at Fontenoy,' published by Dodsley, Fawkes, and others. The conclusion, in particular, does equal honour to our author's head and heart" 45 (December 1775) 580-81.

The pensive Train of Contemplation sweet,  
Rise with the beamy Fires of Vesper's Star;  
The dying Gales in softer Whispers greet  
The shadowy Night, thron'd in her silver Car.

The Scheld in gleamy Radiance glides along,  
Laving the lonely Chartreux' aged bow'rs;  
From pealing organs swells the solemn Song,  
And choral Hymns lead on the midnight Hours.

Save when these Rites the watchful Heart declare,  
A dread Repose broods o'er the hallow'd Ground;  
Or when sad Pilgrims to the Shrines repair,  
Where many a sainted Relick hangs around.

The dusky Pile in Vandal Ages rear'd,  
Sacred to Solitude, to Pray'r, and Praise,  
The Poet's Lay perhaps hath never heard,  
Since the first Father's long-forgotten Days.

Encircling Ivy chains the mould'ring Tow'r;  
Funereal Yews throw round a death-like Gloom;  
Her Cloisters Melancholy wanders o'er,  
And Grief sits languid on the sculptur'd Tomb.

Can Error reign in these calm seats of Peace?  
Here, doth not Wisdom make her blest Abode?  
Doth not the Voice of restless Passion cease?  
Here, the rapt Soul hold Converse with her God?

When the rais'd Spirit, dead to all below,  
Burns with seraphic Ardour unconfin'd,  
Can earth-born Scenes teach human Breast to glow  
With such pure Flames, and leave their Dross behind?

So, when the Tempest low'rs in Ev'ning Skies,  
Some wilder'd Trav'ler views a lambent Flame;  
But led by treach'rous Rays where Danger lies,  
He dies unpity'd, and unknown to Fame.

The Storm-tost Mariner to Ports of Rest  
Anxious, o'er Rocks and wild Waves, works his Way;  
But Wisdom places in the heedless Breast,  
What the false World nor gives, nor takes away.

To these dank Walls, in search of true Repose,  
Thus erring Zeal and harrass'd Minds have flown;  
But found no blest Asylum from the Woes  
That cleave to Life, and haunt the Bosom's Throne.

Though Fancy decorate this awful scene,  
Awhile the slumb'ring Passions Peace controul;  
Yet oft Repentance wastes the placid Mien,  
And silent Anguish preys upon the Soul.

Though down the sounding Isles the Vot'ries muse  
On the World's Vanities and empty Joys;  
Life's fleeting Hours the Visionaries lose,  
Which active Virtue usefully employs.

Nature's Affections on the Heart recoil  
Unchanging, while the purple Currents flow;  
Humanity was born to varying Toil,  
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That Life to sullen Solitude consign'd,  
For social gen'rous Purposes was giv'n:  
No rigid Rules was Penitence enjoin'd,  
"To purify her contrite Heart for Heav'n."

Not countless Orisons at glittering Shrines,  
Not Melodies before the sainted Stone,  
Feed pure Religion's Flame, that faintly shines,  
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O Gesner! hadst thou scorn'd the heav'nly Muse  
That led thy Steps to Virtue and Renown,  
Reviv'd all Eden to thy ravish'd Views,  
And made the Palm of moral Song thine own:

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Would not his bold impartial Tongue declare,

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And all the Brave are Heav'ns peculiar Care?"

"Whether triumphal Wreaths adorn their Brow,  
Or Fate the Warriors from the Toils release,  
When o'er their Graves the weeping Muses strew  
Spring's fairest Flow'rs, and sing their Shade to Peace."

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Yet, while a British Muse still lingers here,  
Can she forbear her Heroes Wounds to feel?  
To pay the sacred Tribute of a Tear?

To deck, with grateful Awe, their hallow'd Mould?  
With gentle Collins breathe the mournful Lay?  
"Attend the Spring with dewy Fingers cold,  
And bless the Turf that wraps their honour'd Clay?"

But ye, who waste in mute lethargic Ease  
Revolving Years, from hardy Manhood's Prime;  
Will Glory sculpture in her Fane like these,  
And snatch your Mem'ries from the Stream of Time?

Here, faint and cold, the drooping Virtues beam,  
With Lustre fruitless, cheerless, and unknown;  
Like sad sepulchral Lamps, that bluey gleam  
Through dreary Vaults, and light the Dead alone.

Unheard the Paeans of the tuneful Train,  
That welcome Truth and Mercy from the Skies,  
To grace Imperial Joseph's halcyon Reign,  
Around whose Throne reviving Honours rise.

O Prince belov'd! some future Bard may pour,  
In loftier Lays, the Tide of Verse along;  
Spread Emulation's Flame from Shore to Shore,  
And Patriot Princes kindle with her Song.

So tow'ring Pindar's Theban Swans aspire,  
Bear to the Clouds his fam'd Sicilian's Praise;  
Like him the Muses's Sons should wake the Lyre,  
To Virtue sacred, and unspotted Bays.

But not to Themes or princely Domes confin'd;  
Along sequester'd Vales they love to stray,  
Where modest Worth, the Grace of Human-kind,  
Blooms in the Shade, and shuns the Glare of Day.

Oft at the silent Eve, or Saffron Dawn,  
There, rapt'rous Visions bless the Poet's Eyes,  
Ideal Forms glide o'er the pearly Lawn,  
Or Structures fair with moral Meaning rise:

Mild beams the Ray from Truth's all-piercing Eye,  
Lucid and full her snowy Mantle flows,  
Touch'd by her Wand the murky Shadows fly,  
And all the Landscape at her Presence glows.

Around their Queen, the Sister Arts attend;  
The Pow'rs of Painting, Melody, and Song;  
And Liberty, the Muse and Virtue's Friend,  
To Honour's Temple leads her Train along;

Unmov'd at Tyranny's malignant Frown,  
Gleaming in Mail, and grasping clanking Chains;  
Red Persecution, with her triple Crown,  
Or Vice, with Satyrs, rev'ling o'er the Plains.

But not one Spark of this celestial Fire,  
Here warms the Heart, unlocks the silent Tongue,  
Or arms with Pow'rs that Freedom could inspire,  
When Zeuxis painted, or Alcaeus sung.

The Lyre, with Rage divine, then fill'd the Breast,  
With glowing Zeal, to bigot Hearts unknown;  
And Genius, with her boldest Strokes, imprest  
The vivid Canvass and the breathing Stone.

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Would such with Rapture on the Canvass dwell?  
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Would Life's warm Pulses emulative swell,  
Like those to conquer, or like those to die?

When Freedom mourns her sacred Fires opprest,  
How bright Demosthenes and Tully shine!  
But here, dull Legends sooth a torpid Rest,  
And all neglected sleeps their Page divine.

So lift the frozen Alps their hoary Brow,  
Cold and unmov'd before the Solar Ray,  
Though roseate Spring smiles in the Vales below,  
Pours her gay Notes, and greets the genial Day.

But let not Candour close the Lay severe,  
Nor frown indignant on a cloister'd Life:  
Haply some antient Virtues linger here,  
That fled from venal Crouds and noisy Strife.

Here the Heart, dead to Folly's tinsel Joys,  
Cleaves to the hallow'd Cross and spiny Crown:  
Those Hours which Vice in Orgies still employs,  
Are wing'd with Praises to their Maker's Throne.

Their Gates, unfolding at the Trav'ler's Voice,  
Declare some hospitable Genius here,  
That bids the weary'd Pilgrim's Heart rejoice,  
Pours Pity's Balm, and shares in Mis'ry's Tear.

So may the Tiding of eternal Peace,

In brighter Worlds, these pious Cares repay!  
There, human Woes with human Frailties cease,  
And Truth no longer mourns her clouded Ray.

[Second edition (1777) 3-14]

# An Elegy written at a Carthusian Monastery.

An Elegy written at a Carthusian Monastery in the Austrian Netherlands.

**Anonymous**

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# An Elegy written at a Carthusian Monastery.

An Elegy written at a Carthusian Monastery in the Austrian Netherlands.

**Anonymous**

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